

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (previously presented) An apparatus comprising:

an active network;

a vehicle including the active network;

a first device;

a second device, wherein the first device and the second device are communicatively coupled by the active network;

a data packet for communication of data between the first device and the second device, the data packet comprising a header portion, a data portion, a trailer portion and an active portion.

2. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the active portion provides active data related to the configuration of the active network.

3. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the active portion provides active data related to the operation of one of the first device and the second device.

4. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the active portion is integrated with the header portion.

5. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the active portion is integrated with the data portion.

6. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the active portion is integrated with the trailer portion.

7. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the active network comprises a plurality of active network elements coupled by connection media, and wherein the active portion contains active data related to the configuration of the active network elements.

8. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the active portion represents a state of an active network element of the plurality of active network elements and wherein the active network is operable to communicate the data packet corresponding to the state.

9. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein at least one of the active network elements comprises a switch.

10. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein at least one of the active network elements comprises a bridge.

11. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein at least one of the active network elements comprises a router.

12. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the active portion contains active network timing information.

13. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the active portion represents a packet state and wherein the active network is operable to communicate the data packet corresponding to the packet state.

14. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the packet state represents a priority state.

15. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the packet state represents an error state.

16. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the packet state represents a normal state.

17. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the active portion comprises information relating to the data packet origin.

18. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the active portion comprises a receipt acknowledgement message.